

>>> Life Transformed <<<



Sunday, 8/12 – 8:00 & 10:45 + Monday, 8/13 – 7 PM

12th Sunday after Pentecost / 11th Sunday after Trinity – 2018

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: Think about a caterpillar... *It's SO AMAZING that it changes into a butterfly!*



God has also worked an amazing change in us – **FROM** a hell-bound child of the devil **TO** a heaven-bound child of God!

Today, we will hear more about that **transformation** and see what it looks like as we return to *Ephesians chapter 4*.

1. **From >>> To:** God makes the change in the heart; then it shows forth in the life!
 - a. FROM Unbeliever: ¹⁷ **Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles [unbelievers] do, in the futility [uselessness] of their minds. ¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to**

their hardness of heart. ¹⁹ They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. // So unbelievers are really messed up! They are active, *yet their actions have no eternal significance.* They are in the dark – *spiritually*, and separated from God; but why? They lack the knowledge of the truth *because they hardened their hearts to it* – **like hard soil to seed** (2Th 2:10b)! They are greedy to sin, *so their desire is strong!* We WERE all like that before God changed us! Now we are to *no longer continue* in such things!

- b. TO Believer: ²⁰ **But that is not the way you learned Christ!** -- ²¹ **assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus,** ²² **to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires,** ²³ **and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds,** ²⁴ **and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.** // Paul implied that his readers WERE taught, *but did they receive that teaching to their benefit?* If so, the Spirit worked to put off **the old ways of living, which include immorality and impurity,** and to put on **the new ways of living, which include knowing, loving, and doing what is right!**

2. **Stop >>> Start:** We used to do that, *but now we do this!*

- a. **Lying** ➡ **Truth:** ²⁵ **Therefore, having put away falsehood [lying], let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one**

of another. // We are to **stop** telling lies – *like we did in our unbelieving past*, and **start** telling the truth, *for the benefit of everyone!*

- b. **Anger** ➔ **Calm**: ²⁶ **Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, ²⁷ and give no opportunity to the devil.** // Anger is not always a sin – *like Jesus cleansing the temple or us being angry about people teaching the wrong way to heaven*. But, *even when it is not a sin*, let us let it go *or the devil will use it to get ahold of us!*
- c. **Steal** ➔ **Share**: ²⁸ **Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.** // So not only should we **stop** stealing – as some WERE doing prior to knowing Christ, *but we should start working and also help those who are in need!*
- d. **Negative** ➔ **Positive**: ²⁹ **Let no corrupting [rotten, worthless] talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.** // So we are to **stop** saying what is negative and worthless, and **start** saying what is positive, beneficial, and appropriate under the circumstances, so that those who hear us will be blessed!
- e. **Sorrow** ➔ **Joy**: ³⁰ **And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.** // As a mom is sad when her son disobeys, so the Spirit is sad when we disobey; therefore, let us **stop** causing sorrow and **start** causing joy!

- f. **Hate** ➔ **Love**: ³¹ **Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.** // Think about the *progression* of those five key words: bitterness and wrath are in the heart; anger shows on the outside; clamor is *heard* on the outside; and slander is an insult against the one opposing us! Therefore, let us realize what is going on in our hearts, so we can **stop** its progression!
- g. **Avenge** ➔ **Forgive**: ³² **Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.** // The old nature wants to get revenge, *but the new nature immediately forgives* – even as God has already forgiven us. As God’s forgiveness is there, *so should be ours*; however, in reality, *some will receive it and some will not*.

3. **Instruction Summary**: ¹ **Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.** // Since God has freely made us His holy children in Christ, *let us love Him by imitating Him!*

4. **Example**: ² **And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.** // As Christ gave Himself up for us – to save us, *so let us follow His example by loving others in sacrificial ways!*

Let Us Pray: Dear Holy Spirit, as caterpillar to butterfly is an amazing transformation, *so we pray that You would powerfully work in us to clearly show who we are in Christ!*